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A
S E R M O N

Occasioned by the
D E A T H

Of the REVEREND

Mr. THOMAS TINGEY,

Who departed this LIFE
November 1, 1729.

Preached to the Church of which
he was PASTOR, Nov. 9.

And published at their REQUEST.

With some ADDITIONS.

By THOMAS RIDGLEY.

L O N D O N,

Printed for AARON WARD, at the *King's-Arms* in
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PHIL. iii. 9.

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.

THE various dispensations of providence, in which the divine sovereignty is display'd, are all attended with instances of the vanity and uncertainty of human prospect, as to what concerns this present state. We are sometimes ready to conclude, after having been toss'd with a tempest, that we are not far from our desired haven, but, on a sudden, are driven back again, and have new difficulties to conflict with. It is but a few weeks ago since we were present at a solemnity in this place, which we hoped would have ended in a lasting settlement;

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but the wise Disposer of all things has order'd it otherwise, and occasion'd a solemnity of a very different nature, in which you, of this society, appear as sheep having no shepherd. This voice, or hand of God, is certainly to be improved; and, in order thereto, I have chosen to insist on the words read to you; in which the Apostle, having before taken an estimate of several things that might tend to advance his character, sets them all aside, and counts them loss, or dross, and dung, in comparison of that, which he reckon'd to be of the highest advantage and importance to attain, and that is what we have in the words of our text, *That I may be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, &c.* as though he should say, If I, who have made a splendid profession of Christ and his gospel, should miscarry at last, how deplorable would my condition be! It is possible for a person to preach Christ, and not to experience his special and distinguishing grace: I am not safe because I am a minister, but my safety consists in my relation to the blessed Jesus; therefore may I be found, living and dying, in him. 'Tis a matter of the greatest moment for us to think before hand how we are like to be found

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found by Christ, the Judge of quick and dead.

The words suppose that he delays his coming, while the day of his patience is lengthen'd out, and his people have an opportunity to serve his interest; but he expects that they should improve the talents and advantages, which they receive, to his glory, and therefore he is consider'd as a Judge that will come, and call every one to an account: this he does, in some respects, in this world; he executes judgment when he appears in some distressing providences, or when he awakens our consciences, and fills them with the dread of his wrath; but this is not done with that solemnity, or in that publick manner, as his judging the quick and dead shall be performed in the great day; therefore we ought to be solicitous how we are like to be found when summon'd to leave the world, and to stand before his tribunal, which summons is sometimes given without warning before hand; and whenever it is issued forth, it must be obey'd. Sometimes he is represented as coming like a thief in the night, to the end that we should be always watchful; and therefore it behoves us often to say to our selves, Are we in such a frame that we
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can, without shrinking, or giving back, entertain the call of God to quit our present station, and remove from our earthly tabernacle? Or in what frame will the great Judge of all find us? What is our state? Is it a state of open rebellion against him? Are we stretching out our hands against God, and strengthening our selves against the Almighty? Do we despise his warnings, or cast contempt on his grace? Are we wicked and sloathful servants, walking as though we had nothing to do for God in the world? Or do we engage in his work with the greatest diligence and delight? Have we respect to all his commandments? And do we make religion our great business, account it the only valuable employment of life, and the glory of God, as it were, the center to which all our actions tend? And is it our constant desire to converse with him, and receive some intimations of his special love to us?

These words may also be consider'd, as applicable to ministers; and accordingly we may suppose the Apostle speaking to this purpose: God has employ'd me in a great work; how shall I be found? Shall I be found amongst those that walk in craftiness, or handle the word of God deceitfully? Shall I be found among the
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number of those who preach not Christ; but themselves? Shall I be found among those who shun to declare the whole counsel of God, and are not much concern'd whether they do good to souls or no, provided they may have their good opinion? This supposes a person enquiring; what doctrines have I deliver'd? Are they such as tend to advance the glory of Jesus Christ, and how have I deliver'd them? Has it been with a becoming zeal for his honour? And have I been always sensible of my need of assistance from him? And have I experienced much of his presence in all my ministrations? Have I reckon'd my self as his servant, to be employ'd by him at his pleasure, and accounted this my glory? And have I had any secret testimonies from his hand, that though, with many infirmities, yet I have obtained mercy from him to be faithful?

Thus we may suppose the Apostle *Paul*, as thoughtful before hand how he was like to be found in the discharge of his ministerial work, and desiring always to behave himself in it, as that he should not be afraid to meet the blessed Jesus, when called out of the world; accordingly, he desires *to be found in him, not having his own righteousness, &c.*

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The Method in which I shall speak to these words, shall be contained in the following *Propositions*.

- I. It is a most desirable thing to be found in Christ.
- II. They who shall be so found are righteous persons, or have an inherent righteousness, which is called their own, which has in it a very great excellency.
- III. How excellent soever it be, yet it must be renounced, and set aside, in the matter of our justification before God.
- IV. That which supplies the defect thereof is the righteousness of Christ.
- V. This righteousness of Christ will afford no comfort or peace, unless it be apprehended by faith.
- VI. When 'tis thus apprehended by us, then we may comfortably conclude that we shall be found in him, or found of him, in peace.

These *Propositions* contain the sense of the words of our text, and we shall consider them in particular.

I. 'Tis a most desirable thing to be found in Christ, that is, to be found
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standing in a special relation to, interested in, and approved by him. To be in Christ, implies a great deal more than barely to be instructed aright in the doctrines of the gospel; or to bear the Christian name, as the word is sometimes used, when applied to whole churches, who are said to be *in him*^a; therefore he doth not intend hereby only an adherence to the Christian doctrine, as opposed to the ceremonial law, which, if we suppose the following words to contain an explanation of it, will be farther consider'd under our next *Head*. It is certain, many know Christ, according as he is revealed in his word, who have no right and title to eternal life; therefore there is something more than this included in that expression. Now there is a being in Christ, by what some call a mystical union, or implantation. This is illustrated by the union between the root and branches^b, whereby the branch receives life, and bears fruit, by virtue of what it has communicated to it from the root: thus we live unto God by the spiritual and divine influences, which we receive from Christ, the spring and fountain of all good actions.

^a Gal. i. 22. 1 Theff. ii. 14.

^b John xv. 1, 2.

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Again, there is a being in Christ as our federal Head, as he is said to be the Representative of all his elect; and, in that respect, they are all in him, intrusted in his hand, and are, or shall be, made partakers of those blessings which he has purchased for them, which some call, speaking agreeably to the phrase used in scripture^a, a conjugal relation to him. Others consider him as herein opposed to the first *Adam*, the federal, as well as natural Head of all his posterity; so Christ, *the second man, the Lord from heaven*^b, is the Head of all his spiritual seed, who are, in this respect, united to him.

Taking the words, in both these senses, to be in Christ, has several blessed consequences attending it, namely, such are said to live by him, and *their life to be hid with Christ in God*^c; they depend upon him for all supplies, and of *his fulness receive grace for grace*^d. To be in him is to be born from above, to be *begotten again to a lively hope by his resurrection*^e, and to have communion with him: thus,

^a Isai. liv. 5. Jer. iii. 14. Rev. xix. 7. Spiritual privileges, which are said in scripture to belong to the church in general, are applicable to its particular members, so far as their capacities and circumstances will admit of.

^b 1 Cor. xv. 47.

^c Col. iii. 3.

^d John i. 16.

^e 1 Pet. i. 3.

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says the Apostle, may I be found; may I so live, that I may be among those who converse with Christ here, that, when he appears, I may live for ever with him hereafter.

I might have consider'd, under this head, that we read, in scripture, sometimes of *Christ's dwelling in the heart*^a. This he does by his Spirit, when he exerts divine power, and causes the dead to hear his voice and live; God is said to be where he acts; so the presence of Christ, by his Spirit in the hearts of believers, consists in the powerful influence exerted by him, whereby he works in them that which is well pleasing in his sight; and accordingly they are called^b, the *temple of the Holy Ghost*, which God himself has built, and which is to be consecrated to his service. On the other hand, sometimes they are said to be united to Christ by faith, which is to be taken in a sense different from the former; Christ dwells in us by his Spirit, and hereby works and excites faith; and we are united to him by faith, when, by this grace, we lay hold of and live upon him; when we derive virtue from him our Head. This is one thing intended, in what the

^a Eph. iii. 17. I John iii. 24. ^b I Cor. iii. 16, 17.

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Apostle says, when he desires to be found in Christ ; which leads us to consider,

II. They who shall be found in Christ are righteous persons, or have an inherent righteousness which is called their own, which has a peculiar glory and excellency in it. Here we speak of a righteousness which is not to be accounted the foundation of our right and title to eternal life ; not such as will afford us a sufficient plea at the bar of God, as the ground upon which we expect to be owned and publickly acquitted by him, and as the consequence thereof, to live for ever with him : but by it we understand ; an universal holiness of heart and life, which the Apostle calls *his own righteousness*, and opposes it to that which he looked for *by faith, in Christ*.

For the understanding of this, let it be considered ; that though he calls it *a righteousness which is of the law*, he doth not intend hereby barely or principally his former observance of the institutions of the ceremonial law ; it is true he speaks of himself in *Ver. 5. as circumcised the eighth day, &c.* and as *touching the law, a Pharisee* ; and it is more than probable, that he was as tenacious of the less weighty matters of the law, as our Saviour calls

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calls them ^a, as any that went under that denomination are said to have been; but it must also be considered that the Pharisees made high pretensions to holiness, and therefore appeared to the world to have a great regard to the moral law, and accordingly the Apostle reckons himself herein not to have been inferior to any of them, when he says, *Ver. 6. touching the righteousness which is in the law he was blameless*; and to this let me add, that he doth not only intend by his own righteousness an ignorant hypocritical pretension made to religion, with a design to gain the esteem and applause of the world; since that is inconsistent with the beautiful gradation whereby he proceeds from things less excellent to those that were more so, when he says, *Ver. 8. yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus*, and when comparing them with Christ and his righteousness, speaks diminutively of them: now it would detract very much from the beauty of the Apostle's way of speaking, if we suppose nothing else is intended hereby than that Christ's righteousness is much more excellent than those moral virtues which the Pharisees

^a Matt. xxiii. 23.

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pretended to, or were possessed of. If it be said that this is an undoubted truth: I will also take leave to add that it is as great a truth that his righteousness is infinitely preferable to the highest attainments which the apostle had arrived to as a christian; and was also conducive to answer the end intended thereby, to wit, our justification in the sight of God. Therefore though I don't deny that the Apostle renounces or excludes any degree of moral virtue, or other righteousness consisting in his observance of the ceremonial law, from being the matter of his justification, yet I humbly conceive that he means by his own righteousness, something, which he also sets aside as to this matter, that had in it a greater degree of excellency, which is that which we call universal holiness of heart and life; including in it a qualification and disposition to exercise all those graces which have in them such an excellency that cannot be sufficiently valued.

Every thing that hath the marks and characters of the divine power and goodness in it, is proportionably excellent: but this is eminently so, in as much as it is ^a called our being *made partakers of a*

^a 2 Pet. i. 4.

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divine nature ; it is the principal part of the *image of God* in Man^a, and therefore the greatest ornament next to Christ's righteousness, to which it is opposed, that we can have in this world ; upon the account hereof it is said concerning the church, the king's daughter, that she is *all glorious within*^b, and it is this that makes the righteous man *more excellent* in himself *than his neighbour*^c.

When we consider believers as having a principle of spiritual life implanted in them, this principle excited, and they enabled to live to God and converse with him ; when they live above and are daily training up for Glory, and are said to be made *kings and priests to God*^a, enabled to subdue their corruptions, maintain a perpetual conflict with their spiritual enemies, and consecrate themselves and all their services unto his glory ; this they are to set a great value upon, and bless God for, who is the author, though they are the immediate subjects thereof, upon which account it is called *their own*.

And we may take a farther estimate of its excellency, in as much as it is necessa-

^a Eph. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10. ^b Psal. xlv. 13. ^c Prov. xii. 36. ^d Rev. i. 6.

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ry to, and inseparably connected with salvation; and so, though it be opposed, and infinitely inferior to Christ's, righteousness, yet one is not more necessary hereunto than the other. To say a person destitute of a principle of grace may be saved, or that one, who is running on in all excess of riot, may have hope, is to cast the greatest contempt on the gospel, and to speak very unbecoming a Christian; therefore we suppose that every one who is found in Christ, or is like to be found in him, has a righteousness, is a holy man, walks with God, and makes his glory his highest end in all things; which leads us to consider,

- III. How excellent soever this righteousness is, it must be set aside in the matter of our justification. The Apostle seems to depreciate that which we have before considered as an inestimable privilege; but he does it only, in this respect, as it concerns our being justified in the sight of God, as put in the room of, or consider'd as co-ordinate with Christ's: But take it in any other view, and the same Apostle sets the highest value upon it; nothing can be more express than what he asserts concerning the necessity of
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of holiness, *without which*, he says, *no man shall see the Lord^a*; and when his enemies, at any time, attempted to weaken his hands, by insinuating as though some doctrines he delivered led to licentiousness; or when they pretended that men, from thence, might take occasion to *do evil that good might come*, he charges it on his accusers, as a malicious *slander^b*; and when they object against him, as though he handled the doctrine of justification by faith, in such a way, as that hereby he *made void the law*, he not only denies the charge, but shews that it led directly to the contrary, or *tended to establish it^c*; therefore none can suppose that, in our text, he advances any thing that tends to lessen our esteem of universal holiness, when he says, let me be found in him, *not having mine own righteousness*, whereby he does not mean; let me be found by him an unholy man, as though it had been of no concern to him whether he was found walking with God or no: but he means this; when he calls me hence, let me not be dealt with according to the tenor of my own righteousness; *not having* our own righteousness, is as much as to say, not insisting

^a Heb. xii. 14. ^b Rom. iii. 8. ^c Chap. iii. 31.

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on it, as that on the account whereof we hope to be justified in the sight of God. Observe, it is one thing for God to own the graces he has implanted, which he certainly doth; for whatever workmanship of God we behold, either in nature or grace, it must be consider'd as good, and, as such, is the object of his approbation: but we are now speaking of a person's being accepted for his works, that is justified, or his sins pardon'd, for the sake of his righteousness; and, in that respect, the Apostle sets it aside altogether, which is as though he should say; how glorious and excellent soever the work be which God hath wrought in me, yet I cannot think of being dealt with according to what I have found in my self. Now the reason of this is, because our best performances have nothing in them that can merit any blessing at the hand of God, inasmuch as they are not our own, but his, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure; therefore it is a very preposterous thing to suppose that we merit any thing by paying a just debt, which we are enabled to pay, by him, to whom it was due.

Moreover, we cannot expect to come off clear at the bar of God, because of
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our own works, inasmuch as there is a mixture and tincture of sin in them, they are, at best, but like gold, that has more dross in it than pure metal; there is a great deal of corruption adhering to grace, which is a reproach and defilement to it; upon this account the Psalmist says, *If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand^a? And enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified^b.* When we consider what dishonour we bring to God, even while we are engaged in the best duties; and not only how we rebelled against him before we were called by his grace, but also how treacherous and perverse our hearts have been; since then, we must certainly conclude, that this is not such a sacrifice that we may offer to God, as the foundation of the acceptance of our persons in his sight.

Once, indeed, man, when in a state of innocency, had a sinless righteousness, in which he stood guiltless before God, which, though it was infinitely less glorious than that which is wrought out by Christ for us, yet it was perfect in its kind, and not only adapted to the state

^a Psal. cxxx. 3.

^b Psal. cxliii. 2.

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in which he was; but it was such in which the justice of God found no blemish, and therefore he had, at least, a right to impunity founded thereon; and, had he persisted in his integrity till the time of his probation was over, it might have been pleaded as what would have given him a right to eternal life, according to the tenour of the first covenant, which he was under: But this he has irrecoverably lost; and therefore, if he seeks a justifying righteousness in himself, he will be miserably disappointed; for were it possible for us to attain to a perfection of sanctification, for the future, in this life, this would not atone for, or discharge us from, the guilt of past crimes: but, alas! we come so far short of perfection, that it may truly be said, *that there is not a just man upon earth, that doth good, and sinneth not*^a, viz. not only after he has done this good, but, in many respects, while he is doing it. Not but that there is a visible difference between good and bad actions; but yet, if we consider the defects that attend our good actions, as to the degree thereof, and how we oftentimes offend as to the manner of performing them, or our end

^a Eccles. vii. 20,

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therein, and what remainders of corruption there are in the best of men, which clogs, fullies, and defiles the very principle of action, inasmuch as we are renew'd but in part; it will certainly follow from hence, that whatever we do, it is far from being a sufficient plea in the sight of a holy God, in order to our obtaining that right to eternal life, which is confer'd in justification. In this sense it is that the Apostle sets aside, or desires not to be found, having his own righteousness; which leads us to consider,

IV. That which supplies this defect, is the righteousness of Christ. When the Apostle had said, let me not be found, having mine own righteousness, or that he desired not to be dealt with according to what he was in himself, he adds; let the whole affair of my justification, or discharge from guilt and condemnation, be founded on Christ's righteousness. Here we must consider that it is necessary for us to have something to plead, which God can in honour accept of, as a price of redemption, upon the account whereof we may be justified; and since nothing done by us, or wrought in us, can be deemed so, it is to be sought elsewhere;
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and the Apostle tells us where it is, to be found, namely in Christ.

Here we must conclude that God has appointed our Lord Jesus Christ to be the propitiation for sin, he hath called him to engage in this great work of satisfying for that debt which we had contracted; and being called to it, he willingly took the work upon him, he was not rebellious. And upon his engaging to perform it, God the Father promised in the eternal transaction between them both, that he should be crowned with glory and honour, which should not only be personal, but relative, and so redound to the advantage of his people, or that he should have a seed to serve him, which should be, to all eternity, monuments erected to his praise, who loved them, and washed them from their sins, in his own blood. And in subserviency hereunto, God the Father engaged by promise that he should have a human nature prepared, curiously framed in such a way, as that it should be freed from the least tincture of sin, for *such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners*^a; and in order hereto, that he should be wholly

^a Heb. vii. 26.

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exempted from the guilt of original sin, which had he not been, he would have had a debt of his own, in common with all who descend from *Adam* in a natural way, to have satisfy'd for, and would have been rank'd among the race of fallen men; and like *Aaron*, he must have had two sacrifices to offer, one for himself, and another for the sins of his people; and it would not have been said concerning him, that he was guilty only as bearing our guilt, and therefore he would have been unfit for this great undertaking. Therefore as a necessary expedient to prevent this inconvenience, his human nature was formed in such a way as was not according to the fixed laws of nature, in that he was born of a Virgin, which was a miracle no less supernatural, than if his human nature had been produced as *Adam's* was out of the earth, or, as the first matter of all things, out of nothing. This effectually exempted him, tho' in other respects the seed of *Adam*, from being included in that covenant which he violated, and so from coming into the world with the guilt of his first sin upon him. It is not a similitude of nature that renders a person guilty of *Adam's* sin; for if God should in a miraculous way produce another world of Men, however they might

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might be allied to the first man in some respects, yet they would be produced perfectly innocent as he was at first. This wonderful circumstance in the formation of Christ's human nature, render'd it fit for the work design'd to be perform'd in it. But since we may suppose it possible for a human nature perfectly guiltless to contract guilt, arising from the mutability thereof, of which we had a sad instance in our first parents, it was necessary that this should be fenc'd against in what respects the human nature of Christ; and in order thereto, it was necessary that he should have a degree of the spirit far exceeding that measure which the best of men in this world are made partakers of, that so he might be kept sinless; that the oblation which he was to make, might not have, during the whole time that he was ordained to obey and suffer, any thing in it that might render it ineffectual; and accordingly as he is said to have been filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb; so he had sufficient security given him that whatever temptations or difficulties he might be expos'd to, there should be a present and immediate interposure of the same spirit, to preserve him from the least sin.

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Moreover, this human nature, which was to be thus provided, and fortified against every thing that might occasion its miscarriage, was to be united to the divine, that by this means what was done by him therein (as indeed all acts of obedience were perform'd, and his sufferings endur'd by him only in the human nature) might have an infinite dignity and value added to it as the result of the union of the nature that obeyed, and suffered, therewith; and therefore that this price should be a glorious one, which it would be no dishonour for the justice of God to accept of, inasmuch, as hereby all the divine perfections should be illustrated, and in particular, the justice of God magnified, in that an infinite price should be payed, and the law not only fulfilled, but *made honourable*^a; Satan conquer'd and destroy'd, and a way prepared for the poor sinful creature, who was, by reason of his iniquity, banish'd from the presence of God, to have access with boldness to the throne of grace, and a place prepared in heaven for him.

This leads us briefly to consider what he was to do and suffer for us, being so

^a Isaiah xlii, 21.

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gloriously furnished for this undertaking: this is sometimes express'd in scripture in a figurative way, where the most difficult part of the work is taken for the whole; and so justification is ascrib'd to his shedding his blood ^a, and he is said to give *his life* a ransom for many ^b; and elsewhere we have an instance of the same figurative way of speaking, whereby it is ascrib'd to his *active obedience*, for that is the sense of the word ^c which we render *obedience*, when 'tis said ^d, by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. And the Apostle seems to include them both, or his whole course of obedience and sufferings in his life and at his death, when he speaks of him ^e, as *becoming obedient unto death*; so that upon the whole, we must conclude, that whatever he did or suffered before his resurrection from the dead, are all ingredients in this righteousness; or if you apply this to the necessities of man, in whose room he stood, our defect of perfect obedience to the commanding will of God, must be supply'd by his active obedience, and the debt of sufferings which we were oblig'd to pay to the vindictive justice of God, must be satisfied for by

^a Rom. v. 9.

^b Matth. xx. 28.

^c ὑπακοή.

^d Rom. v. 19.

^e Phil. ii. 8.

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his sufferings which he endur'd in his human nature, which were as effectual to answer the end designed thereby, considering the dignity of the person enduring them, as though they had been of an eternal duration, or had had those circumstances contain'd in them, which would have been the consequence of our enduring the punishment due to sin in our own persons, namely despair, and a real separation from God, which he was entirely exempted from.

These things Christ undertook to do : the undertaking was from eternity, the accomplishment thereof in time, which was begun immediately upon his incarnation, and finished when he was raised from the dead, at which time he was a consummate Mediator, and then he went and took possession of that glory which was, according to the eternal covenant, to be the result hereof. This is what we reckon the great foundation of our glorying, as well as of our safety and happiness in life and death ; namely, what Christ hath done for us : but then we must not only consider what he has done as being of infinite value, but also as placed to our account, otherwise it would not avail us. Christ's obedience and sufferings must be imputed to us ; for we

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must suppose that there was a debt due from us to the justice of God, which we should never have been able to pay, and therefore must have been cast into hell for ever ; Christ, as hath been shewn, was able to do it, but then what he did must be done in our name, and in our stead, and therefore he must not only perform some acts of obedience, and endure some sufferings, but he must do this as our surety, and in our room. Accordingly he is said ^a, to be *made sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*. The Apostle speaks of a double imputation, to wit, of our sins to Christ, and of his righteousness to us. He was made sin for us, that is, designing to atone for our guilt, it was (as was necessary from the nature of the thing) placed to his account, and as the result hereof, we are made the righteousness of God in him, as his righteousness was placed to ours. We are not indeed to suppose that by Christ's being made sin for us, his holy nature was tainted with sin ; no, if so, his offering would have been abhor'd by God. It is one thing to have sin infused, and another thing to have it imputed or

^a 2 Cor. v. 21.

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placed to the account of him who was in all other respects innocent, as well as the Lamb of God without spot; therefore when we speak of our debts being placed to his account, we suppose that when he came into the world with our nature united to his divine, he came with our guilt upon him; that is, he came with resolution to answer for the sins that we had committed, that so the justice of God might be no loser; and as the consequence thereof, when he had discharged the debt which he undertook to pay, he was justify'd in, or by the Spirit^a, when *declared to be the son of God, with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead^b*; at which time he was declared to have accomplished the work which he came into the world about.

Then follows the imputation of his righteousness to us, or the placing it to our account, that so by this means we might be discharged from guilt and condemnation, by something done for us without us. Observe, as our sins were placed to Christ's account, which was no dishonour to him, because not committed, but only the guilt thereof born by

^a 1 Tim. iii. 16.

^b Rom. i. 4.

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him, and that with his own consent; so his righteousness was not wrought out by us, but by him, and imputed to us, and upon the account hereof we are accepted; it is this that we must plead, when standing at the tribunal of God; and 'tis what the Apostle means, when he says, let me be found, having on Christ's righteousness.

V. This righteousness cannot afford us any comfort, or peace, unless it be apprehended, received, or applied by faith. We have hitherto consider'd the Person of the Redeemer, and by what it was that he wrought our redemption, or the price he paid to the justice of God, and how this was placed to our account, inasmuch as God deals with us, as though we had paid the debt in our own persons; or he justifies us for the sake of the righteousness of Christ, as truly as though it had been wrought out by us, though the glory of all is due to him who wrought it out: But what is this to us, with respect to our peace, unless we believe? Which leads us to consider how justification is said to be by faith, or what the Apostle means by *the righteousness which is of God by faith*. Here is a righteousness which is said to be of God, that is, not only

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only originally from God the Father, as he called the Mediator to this work, and afterwards declared himself well pleased with him in the performance thereof; but 'tis the righteousness of a divine Person as wrought out by the Son, who is true and proper God, in his human nature: this is what the Apostle calls *the righteousness of God*, as he elsewhere^a styles the blood, with which he redeemed his church, *the blood of God*; there being, in this instance, what divines generally call a *Communication of Properties*, whereby what was done by him, in one nature, is attributed to him, who is described as having another nature; so that as he, who is man, paid an infinite price; the same Person, who is also God, performed those services, and endured those sufferings, which are attributed to him in his human nature. Such a righteousness as this is the matter of our justification; but then we must consider the work of faith, with relation thereunto; 'tis that grace which applies, depends on, and pleads this righteousness. We see, in our selves, nothing but what is unworthy of the divine acceptance, and much more unworthy of the blessings which we stand in need of: there

^a AGs xx. 28.

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are abundance of defects attending our holy duties, so that when we are in the best frame of Spirit, we commit some sins that need forgiveness; therefore faith takes a view of Christ, as the Lord our righteousness, and considers him as having procured every thing for us that may tend to secure our compleat blessedness; hereupon the believer, being emptied of all self-confidence, burden'd with guilt, and affected with a sense of his many violations of the holy law of God, together with his utter inability to repair the injuries done to his justice, by any thing that he can either do or suffer; and dreading the thoughts of falling into the hand of an absolute God, who is a consuming fire, flies to Christ as a refuge, *and lays hold upon the hope set before him*^a, in the gospel, desiring to be dealt with by God, not according to what he has deserved at his hand, but according to what Christ has done, suffered, and merited for him; which is as though he should say, Lord, though I am not able to satisfy thy justice, yet Christ has done it; though I offend daily, and thereby render myself more guilty before thee; yet this is my only encouragement, that he has sa-

^a Heb. vi. 18.

tisfied for this debt, and thereby procured a discharge from guilt and condemnation; for all those for whom this payment was made, therefore may I be dealt with as one who has an interest therein. I offend daily, but he has brought glory to thy law, and secured the honour of all thy divine perfections, so that thou may'st now appear to *be just*, and yet *the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*^a. I now appeal, from mine own guilt and imperfections, to that perfect righteousness which he has wrought out; let me be accepted upon his account. Here, says the soul by faith, I rest, determining to look no where else for this necessary and invaluable privilege; let me, both living and dying, be found in Christ. This is what we call the apprehending, pleading, and applying Christ's righteousness by faith, as having a more immediate regard to his payment of the debt of suffering that was due from us, as a ground of hope, that we shall be exempted from suffering the punishment which our sins had deserved.

But inasmuch as we are sensible of our defects of obedience, or sins of omission,

^a Rom. iii, 26.

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whereby a great degree of guilt is contracted, we farther proceed, by faith, to plead that Christ has performed active obedience for us. I own my self, says the soul, under a necessary obligation, to yield obedience to God; and, when I consider the holiness of his law, which cannot dispense with the least sin, as well as his sovereignty and right to be obey'd by his creatures, which he cannot relinquish, and so conclude my self, as a creature, bound to perform perfect obedience, and that nothing short of this can be accepted as a justifying righteousness; and yet that I am utterly unable to perform it, this would sink me into despair, did I not apprehend and fix mine eye on Christ's sinless obedience, as what I hope and trust God has accepted instead thereof; thus faith applies, and pleads what Christ has done for us.

But this is not to be consider'd as what gives us a discharge from our obligation to obey; so that while faith pleads Christ's fulfilling the law, as the foundation of our being deliver'd from its curse, and condemning sentence, there is not the least ground to suppose our selves exempted from an obligation to yield obedience to it, but
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rather that we are under an additional engagement thereunto; it does not plead Christ's having obey'd for us, to give countenance to any defect of obedience in us, but as the foundation of our hope, that the justice of God will not charge it upon us, so as to punish us for it. This plea, which faith makes, is necessary, in order to the establishing our claim to, and interest in, Christ's righteousness; so that, upon the whole, though we are not justified for our faith, yet we are justified in a way of believing, and accordingly are enabled first to apply Christ's righteousness, and then the comfortable fruits and effects thereof, and so to conclude that we are discharged from guilt, by what he has done for us. It is the application of a benefit procured by another, that will turn to our account in this instance, in which we are not able to procure it our selves, and no other could do it for us but Christ; so that we have no ground to say that we are interested in him, unless we have a right, by faith, to conclude, that he hath loved us, and given himself for us, the contrary to which would be the highest presumption: now faith is that grace that gives us a warrant to conclude that Christ's

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righteousness is ours, and that what he has done, is placed to our account, which is a foundation for our rejoicing in him.

VI. When Christ's righteousness is thus apprehended by us, we may comfortably conclude, that we shall be *found in him*, or found of him, in peace. This is the soul's great expedient for the obtaining peace; it is this alone that can quiet conscience, and give the greatest security against all the charges that are brought in against us, either by the law of God, which we have daily violated, or his justice, which we have offended, and cannot give satisfaction to; it is this alone that can afford us joy and comfort, when other things seem to administer trouble to us. It is Christ's righteousness, applied by faith, that lays a foundation for our glorying in him; for when we can make this application to our selves, then we may say our debt is cancel'd; that which was the ground of controversy between God and our souls, is removed, and our persons accepted; so that we may behold the face of God, the Judge of all, with comfort, and encourage our selves to hope, that, when he appears, we shall
appear

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appear with him in glory ; for who shall lay any thing to our charge, so as to bring us into a condemned state, if we can say it is God that justifies us ? It is this that will give us comfort, and joy unspeakable, and full of glory, in the midst of all the troubles of life, or when we are called hence by death ; which is what the Apostle intends, by being found in Christ.

This leads us to make some practical application of what has been laid down under the foregoing heads.

1. This reproves those who are unconcerned about eternity, and the matters of another world, as though they were always to continue here, and were not accountable to God, or under the divine inspection ; as though the day of God's patience were not to be improved, or because the Judge delays his coming, they might conclude he will never come : and do not the greatest part of mankind live thus without God in the world ? Do they not cast off fear, regardless of that solemn and awful day, which should fill us with the highest concern of Spirit, and which we should always desire to be in readiness for ?

2. Though

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2. Though believers are habitually prepared for Christ's second coming, yet they should endeavour after an actual meetness for it; and ought always so to walk, as that they may not be afraid to receive the summons, though it may be given on a sudden; and, though we should be called hence in our full strength; though the messenger should be sent when we vainly promise our selves a long and undisturbed possession of the enjoyments of this present life, ought we not always so to act, as those who know that we are walking on the brink of the grave? Should not this fill us with an holy zeal for the glory of God, and be an inducement to us to give a check to our selves when we walk unbecoming the gospel, when we are careless and supine, when we regard not the tokens, or warnings of God, that he gives us, or when we behave our selves in a formal and hypocritical manner? When corrupt nature breaks forth in various instances, should we not say within our selves, do we so walk as we desire to be found? Are we slothful in God's work? and would we be found so? Happy is that man who lives in such a way, in which he may safely desire to be found by Christ at last.

3. Let

3. Let us duly improve the doctrine of justification by Christ's righteousness, as that which has a tendency to promote holiness of life, at the same time that it directs us in the way of peace; when the Apostle had been considering how *grace reigns through righteousness unto life eternal*, and putting the church in mind how they were *not under the law*, that is, not under the condemning sentence thereof, he exhorts them from hence to *yield themselves to God*^a. And when he had been putting them in mind of their privilege as delivered from condemnation, which is contain'd in this general proposition; *there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus*^b; a great part of what follows is a practical improvement of this doctrine; tending to press them to, and direct them how they should *walk, not after the flesh, but after the spirit*. And this is the improvement he makes of this doctrine in several *Verses* following our text, and proposes himself as an ensample to others, not only as desiring an interest in Christ's righteousness, but as *reaching forth to those things which are before, pressing towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus*, exert-

^a Rom. vi. 13, &c.

^b Rom. viii. 1.

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ing himself with all his might in the progressive work of sanctification: and he calls those who walk otherwise, whose *God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things* no other than *enemies of the cross of Christ*, and therefore concludes them far from being in a justify'd state.

Moreover, holiness is what this doctrine lays us under the highest obligations to; where much is forgiven it will lead us to love much; and to express a sense of gratitude by universal obedience. Faith, if I may so express it, has two hands, with one it lays hold on Christ's righteousness for justification, with the other it takes hold on his strength or promised assistance, to discharge the duties we are called to perform, and to exercise ourselves in keeping consciences void of offence both towards God and man.

4. If we have a comfortable ground of hope that we shall be found of Christ in a justified state, let this be improved as a motive to the greatest thankfulness to him *who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood*^a, let us endeavour to be found blessing and praising him for this inestimable privilege: this is to begin

^a Rev. i. 5.

the work of heaven while here upon earth.

And as an enducement hereunto, let us consider what a deplorable state we are delivered from, and what privileges we have a right to, since he *who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, will, we hope and trust, as having his warrant for it^a, with him freely give us all things.* We have much in possession but more in reversion; and therefore, our hearts should be enlarged in his praises, by whose grace we are what we are, and who will perfect what concerns us, as he gives us ground to conclude, in that golden chain of salvation^b, *whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.*

And this leads me to speak something more especially to the present occasion.

Having observed, that ministers ought so to behave themselves in the discharge of their ministerial work, that when Christ calls them hence, they may be prepared to obey the summons, as being found in him; I cannot but

^a Rom. viii. 32.

^b Rom. viii. 30.

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take occasion to speak something concerning your dear and beloved Pastor, whom I always esteemed and valued, and with whom I have had a particular intimacy ever since he first enter'd on the work of the ministry, which is (I think) about thirty years since, after he had pursued those preparatory studies, which were necessary thereunto^a. And, so far as I had an opportunity to observe it, he never settled in any place, but, through the evenness of his temper, and the in-offensiveness of his behaviour, he gain'd respect, even from those who were in a different way of thinking from himself; and this being attended with many other endowments, which render'd him well qualified for usefulness, and a great blessing from God attending his labours, gave him a very great interest in the affections of those who sat under his ministry, or were more immediately under his pastoral care.

He has, ever since he was employ'd in publick service, appear'd to have had a great zeal to do good to souls. His method of preaching was formerly, as well as of late, such as gave his hearers the

^a This he did, under the direction of the learned and excellent Mr. *Thomas Goodwin*, at *Pinner* in *Middlesex*.

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greatest reason to conclude, that his heart was in his work, and that it was not a light matter to him whether he did good in the course of his ministry or no. You are all witnesses what a flow of affection he had, with what earnestness he spake of divine matters, and how he always chose to insist on the most useful and important subjects, his great design being to advance the Mediator's glory. The doctrine of justification by Christ's imputed righteousness, was what he insisted much upon, as knowing that hereby a person may be enabled to live safely, and die comfortably; and this he had very much on his heart in his last sickness, and, so far as he was master of his own thoughts, he discovered his desire of adhering to this doctrine to the end. It was the practical experience hereof, that occasion'd him to say, when he apprehended himself to be struck with death, *that his Master was now about to call him from his work*; which he exprest with the greatest composure and resignation to the divine will: I have therefore chosen to insist on this subject, as what I thought suitable to the present occasion.

It has pleased God, who is the sovereign disposer of our lives and usefulness,

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to continue him but a little time among you ; where-ever providence has cast his lot, he has been very useful, and had several seals to his ministry ; and I trust, that many of you who have rejoyced therein for a little season, have reason to bless God for it, as being the epistles of the Holy Ghost seen and read of all men. He has been very desirous upon all occasions to preach the gospel, where-ever any serious christians were disposed to attend on it ; he labour'd beyond measure, beyond his strength, and I am apt to think that his constitution was broke by that means, before he came among you : it was indeed a little repaired by means used to preserve health, but far from being a strong constitution, which had been weaken'd in the best employment, by serving his dear Redeemer ; and if any thing will warrant such an expence of health and strength, so great a work as this, which is more than an equivalent for it, will do it. 'Tis amazing to consider what double, yea, I may say, triple service he went through every Lord's day, besides his labours on other days, which were very frequent. He only waited for an opportunity, there was no occasion to press him to the work he was by his office call'd to, and
has

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has for several years past not only embraced, but rejoyc'd in any opportunity to preach the gospel occasionally in those places which were destitute thereof. Since he came to this great city, there being a call to do service in promoting the good of the rising generation, a work which I cannot but mention with the highest esteem, he chearfully embraced it, his heart was very much in it, and it was attended with visible success; whether it was not too much for his constitution I cannot tell, but if it was, he never own'd it, and therein seem'd not to count his strength, yea his very life dear to him, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. I believe you are all Witnesses, that whenever he came to minister unto you, it was a great pleasure to him to be found engaged in his Lord's work; so that the great disposer of all things first enabled him to fulfil his Ministry, and then gave him a discharge from that service. He labour'd more abundantly than most; but the doctrine which we have been insisting on, led him so far to set aside all his usefulness, as not to put it in competition with Christ's righteousness; which,

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which, as it is the foundation of the acceptance of our services, it is the only way in which we are to hope for that reward of Grace which they shall have who have obtain'd mercy from God to be faithful.

As to what concerns those who are in a private capacity, let such endeavour to promote Christ's interest to the utmost; every one is not called to serve him in the work of the ministry, but the work of a christian is such as calls for zeal and faithfulness: none of us ought to live to our selves, but to him whose we are, and whom it is not only our duty but our glory to serve; believers are his by a double tenure, namely, by conquest as well as purchase, and each of these engages to the greatest industry and activity in his service; our conversation ought to be agreeable to the means of grace we are favoured with, as well as the large expectation we have of glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life, at Christ's second coming; and when we have done all, let us count our selves unprofitable servants, who have received much from Christ, but cannot in any degree make him amends; and therefore, should endeavour to walk humbly with him, as well as desire to be found in him.

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One word or two to you who are more immediately concern'd to improve this providence. With respect to the afflicted family which our dear friend and brother hath left behind him, may God fix the instructions which he has given them upon their hearts, so that they may be followers of him as he was of Christ. May all his prayers and the tears he has shed upon their account, be remembered by them. His concern for the good of their souls was very remarkable, and when he perceiv'd any footsteps of the grace of God in any of them, he was filled with a rapture of joy, which ought to make a lasting impression on them; and may the great God enable them to improve this providence to his glory, and their spiritual advantage; and may he discover himself to be a father to the fatherless, and a husband to the widow, from his holy habitation.

As to you of this church, though you have enjoy'd his ministry but a little while, it is your duty and interest, to adorn the gospel of God our Saviour, which he has preached, by a holy conversation. You had indeed a very good prospect of being built up under his ministry, but God who gives no account of his

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his matters to any one, has order'd it otherwise; but consider that the residue of the Spirit is with him. Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer for you is, that the God of the spirits of all flesh, may find out a man that may go out and in before you, that you may not long remain as sheep having no shepherd; and whomsoever you may be directed by providence to make choice of, that he may come unto you in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ, and that in the mean time your hearts may be knit together in love: and may you flourish and be increased with all the increases of God, that so this fore rebuke of providence may be abundantly made up in your enjoying his special presence, who can cause all grace to abound in you.

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